



# Bureau of TennCare

## Policy Manual

<b>Policy No: ORG 06-001</b>
<b>Subject: Responses to Surveys and Requests for Information</b>
<b>Approved by: J.D. Hickey</b> <i>JPH</i>
<b>Date: 1/26/06</b>

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to outline TennCare's requirements and expectations when asked by outside parties to respond to surveys and requests for information. This policy does NOT address requests for information that would include personal health information (PHI). Claim level information is not provided in the absence of a contract or agreement that stipulates the specific use of the data and the duties of the recipient to protect the data, in accordance with HIPAA requirements.

### **POLICY:**

It is the policy of TennCare to attempt to be as helpful as possible to persons, organizations, and agencies who send us surveys and requests for information. We expect, in return, that these persons, organizations, and agencies will comply with the requirements outlined in this policy. Because of the volume of work that goes on at TennCare each day, requests may have to be prioritized.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Bureau of TennCare receives many surveys and information requests. Some of these are quite detailed and require significant staff resources to develop responses. Some do not contain enough detail, which leaves the staff unsure about what is really being asked. It is important that there be a system in place for organizing and prioritizing requests so that staff time is spent as wisely as possible.

## PROCEDURES:

1. Requests for information from TennCare and requests for responses to surveys must be made in writing. The following items must be included in the written request:
  - a. Statement of the purpose of the request;
  - b. Information about who the expected users of the information will be;
  - c. Information about how the survey or research project will be helpful to the people of Tennessee;
  - d. Specific details about the request, such as periods of time (calendar year, state fiscal year, federal fiscal year, etc.—writer should not say just “last year”);
  - e. Agreement to provide an advance copy of the finished product to TennCare before publication;
  - f. Agreement that TennCare will not be held liable for potential issues that may arise from the requester’s use of data provided;
  - g. Agreement to pay charges listed in TennCare Rule 1200-13-11. (Charges will be waived for other governmental entities.)
2. Surveys and requests for information will be prioritized as follows:
  - a. High priority:
    - (1) Surveys from in-state governmental entities.
    - (2) Surveys from out-of-state governmental entities which appear likely to produce results that would be helpful to the people of Tennessee.
    - (3) Surveys from recognized policy groups (such as the Kaiser Foundation) that use the information to publish state-by-state comparisons and analyses that are available to the public.
  - b. Second level priority:
    - (1) Surveys from out-of-state governmental entities which appear unlikely to produce results that would be helpful to the people of Tennessee.
    - (2) Surveys from “think tanks” and trade organizations.
  - c. Low priority:
    - (1) Surveys from individuals, consultants, or agencies who are working on their own research projects.

- (2) Surveys from consultants, trade organizations, and others who appear to be gathering information for marketing purposes.
4. Charges for TennCare work are presented in TennCare Rule 1200-13-11.

**DEFINITIONS:**

1. HIPAA. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.
2. PHI. Personal health information.

**OFFICES OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY:**

- TennCare Office of Policy for program-related surveys
- TennCare Information Services for data
- TennCare Office of Health Care Informatics for data analysis